

Message Text

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61

ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ARA-06 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-03 H-01

INR-07 L-02 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 RSC-01 PRS-01 SP-02

SS-15 USIA-06 NIC-01 SAJ-01 COME-00 EB-07 LAB-04

SIL-01 /077 W

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R 151745Z JAN 75

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TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2918

INFO AMEMBASSY BONN

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AMCONSUL RIO DE JANEIRO

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: ELAB

SUBJECT: ALLEGED FORMER CIA OFFICIAL LINKS ICFTU AND WCL TO
CIA AT BERTRAND RUSSELL TRIBUNAL

REF: BRUSSELS 00306 (NOTAL)

1. SUMMARY. ON JANUARY 11 PHILIP AGEE, WHO DESCRIBES HIMSELF AS
A FORMER CIA EMPLOYEE, TESTIFIED BEFORE THE SECOND BERTRAND RUSSELL
TRIBUNAL IN BRUSSELS. ACCORDING TO ICFTU GENERAL SECRETARY OTTO
KERTEN, AGEE ALLEGED THAT THE ICFTU AND THE WORLD CONFEDERATION
OF LABOR (WCL) HAVE WORKED IN TANDEM WITH THE AFL-CIO AND CIA IN LATIN

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AMERICA AND EUROPE AND CONTINUE TO SERVE AS CIA CONDUITS. END
SUMMARY

2. ON JANUARY 14 ICFTU GENERAL SECRETARY OTTO KERSTEN TELEPHONED THE MISSION LABOR ATTACHE TO EXPRESS HIS DEEP CONCERN WITH THE TESTIMONY OF SELF-PROCLAIMED EX-CIA AGENT PHILIP AGEE AT THE BERTRAND RUSSELL TRIBUNAL WHICH IS CURRENTLY MEETING IN BRUSSELS. KERSTEN IS NOT ATTENDING THE TRIBUNAL SESSIONS BUT SAID HE HAS RECEIVED A FIRSTHAND REPORT FROM AN ICFTU SECRETARIAT REPRESENTATIVE WHO WAS PRESENT AT THE TIME OF AGEE'S TESTIMONY. KERSTEN WAS PARTICULARLY CONCERNED ABOUT PRESS COVERAGE OF THE AGEE STATEMENT WHICH KERSTEN TERMED "A PACK OF LIES". ACCORDING TO KERSTEN, AGEE SINGLED OUT THE AMERICAN INSTITUTE FOR FREE LABOR DEVELOPMENT (AIFLD) AND THE INTERAMERICAN REGIONAL ORGANIZATION OF WORKERS (ORT) AS CIA CONDUITS IN LATIN AMERICA WHICH OPERATE UNDER AFL-CIO AND ICFTU DIRECTION. KERSTEN SAID HE TELEPHONED BECAUSE HE THOUGHT THE USG AND THE AFL-CIO SHOULD KNOW THAT THIS "CRAZY MAN," WHO WAS OBVIOUSLY A "DOUBLE AGENT," IS HAVING SOME SUCCESS IN HIS EFFORT TO DISCREDIT THE ICFTU AND THE AFL-CIO.

3. WITH THE INTENTION OF COUNTERACTING AGEE'S ACCUSATIONS, KERSTEN HAS INVITED SEVERAL KEY FIGURES ON THE BERTRAND RUSSELL TRIBUNAL TO MEET WITH HIS AT THE ICFTU ON FRIDAY, JANUARY 17. HE SAID THAT FORMER DOMINICAN REPUBLIC PRESIDENT JUAN BOSCH WILL BE PRESENT. KERSTEN TOLD US THAT HE DID NOT ARRANGE THE MEETING FOR THE PURPOSE OF DEFENDING THE ICFTU BUT RATHER TO ATTACK THE DETRACTOR. WHEN THE MISSION LABOR ATTACHE SUGGESTED THAT HE WAS PERHAPS OVER-REACTING AND COULD BE GIVING AGEE MORE PUBLICITY THAN HE WOULD OTHERWISE RECEIVE, KERSTEN DISAGREED AND SAID THAT A FRONTAL ASSAULT WAS THE ONLY PROPER RESPONSE.

4. COMMENT: KERSTEN'S REACTION TO THE AGEE STATEMENT WAS SURPRISINGLY STRONG IN LIGHT OF THE FACT THAT THE ICFTU HAS OFTEN BEEN ACCUSED OF HAVING CIA CONNECTIONS AND OF COOPERATING WITH THE AFL-CIO IN CIA OPERATIONS IN THE INTERNATIONAL LABOR FIELD. THIS CAN PROBABLY BE ATTRIBUTED TO THE EXTENSIVE COVERAGE BY THE BELGIAN MEDIA. IN ADDITION TO PRESS ACCOUNTS AGEE HAS ALSO APPEARED ON BELGIAN TV. KERSTEN ALSO EXPRESSED HIS CONCERN ABOUT A BOOK AUTHORED BY AGEE ENTITLED "INSIDE THE COMPANY-A CIA DIARY" WHICH WAS RECENTLY PUBLISHED IN LONDON. IRONICALLY, WHILE ACCUSING AGEE OF EXPLOITING THE RUSSELL TRIBUNAL FOR THE LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
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SOLE PURPOSE OF PROMOTING HIS BOOK KERSTEN LAMENTED THE FACT THAT HE HAS BEEN UNABLE TO FIND A COPY OF THE BOOK ANYWHERE.

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